

**For Immediate Release**

**BEA Shows Continued Support of SMEs by  
Backing the Special Loan Guarantee Scheme's Enhanced Measures**

**Hong Kong, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2009** – The Bank of East Asia (“BEA”) today announces its support of the enhanced measures of the Special Loan Guarantee Scheme (“SpGS”) recently implemented by the Government of the Hong Kong SAR. BEA is offering interest rates as low as its Best Lending Rate minus 1.5% p.a. and a waiver of the arrangement fee to small and medium enterprises (“SMEs”) for early bird applications received on or before 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2009. Currently, BEA's Best Lending Rate is 5.25% p.a.

First launched by the Government on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2008, the SpGS is a funding scheme designed to help SMEs secure financing for business growth. Acting as guarantor, the Government assists SMEs in obtaining loans from participating lending institutions. BEA has been an active participating bank in the SpGS since its establishment.

The Government will provide a guarantee of up to 80% of the approved loan. Each local SME may now apply for a total loan amount of up to HK\$12 million with BEA for maximum loan tenor of five years. Within this limit, each SME may obtain a revolving credit line of up to HK\$6 million from the Bank. Revolving credit lines include overdraft facilities, revolving letters of credit line in support of trade finance, etc. These enhancements, which came into effect on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2009, aim to strengthen the support available to local SMEs in the midst of the global financial crisis.

Mr. Adrian M.K. Li, BEA's Deputy Chief Executive, says, “SMEs are the backbone of our local economy and their health is vital for Hong Kong's continued growth and prosperity. For more than 90 years, we at BEA have been dedicated to serving locally-owned enterprises and our support of the SpGS reflects our unwavering commitment to the local business community. We look forward to continuing to work closely with our SME clients in order to help them achieve their business goals despite the current economic challenges.”

SMEs interested in learning more about the SpGS or BEA's comprehensive range of corporate banking services are welcome to call the BEA Enquiry Hotline on (852) 2211 1338 or (852) 3608 0838.



## About The Bank of East Asia

Incorporated in Hong Kong in 1918, BEA is dedicated to providing comprehensive retail and commercial banking services to its customers in Hong Kong, Greater China, and overseas. BEA is the largest independent local bank in Hong Kong, with total consolidated assets of HK\$415.3 billion (US\$53.58 billion) as of 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2008. The Bank is listed on the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong and is one of the constituent stocks of the Hang Seng Index.

With more than 240 outlets worldwide, BEA operates an extensive international network covering Hong Kong and Greater China, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the British Virgin Islands, and Southeast Asia. For more information on BEA, please visit any BEA branch or the Bank's homepage at [www.hkbea.com](http://www.hkbea.com).

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with over 130 branches and SupremeGold Centres around town***